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# THE Sovereign Nation

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## PRISON PROTEST IMMINENT

Reports received from Portlaoise Prison this week (23rd November) are describing deteriorating conditions for anti-agreement Republican prisoners currently on remand.

The group, which is the second largest group in the prison, are complaining of lack of facilities, exercise time and being subjected to cramped conditions among other things.

Numerous approaches have been made to the Prison governor, which have been fobbed off or ignored.

The prisoners feel that the tactics being employed against them are deliberately designed to break them, they are determined to resist such attempts.

Patience is wearing thin, and the latest communication from the gaol is for some form of protest to be staged.

Meanwhile in Limerick Jail, Josephine Hayden has spent the last two years of her life in the "C" Wing of Limerick prison - a wing that even the governor of Limerick jail has admitted is "...the worst we have..."

Because of these appalling conditions, Josephine has suffered two heart attacks and contracted a very serious kidney infection.

When Josephine suffered her first heart attack, it took authorities over an hour to reach her cell and transport her to Limerick Regional Hospital. Prison authorities blatantly defied the advice of the cardiologist at Limerick Regional Hospital and moved her back to her cell.

One month later, Josephine suffered a second heart attack. She is forced to climb several flights of stairs to use bathroom facilities, which doctors advise is detrimental to her health. She has also contracted a kidney infection due to the unsanitary facilities in the "C" wing. She has been denied both exercise and fresh air. She is essentially being kept in a cage.

Councillor Francie Mackey Chairman of the 32 County Sovereignty Movement called for the immediate release of Josephine Hayden and for an end to the terrible conditions both in Portlaoise Prison and Limerick Gaol.

Cllr Mackey said "It is abundantly clear that these prisoners are being disgracefully discriminated against because of their political beliefs. What we are witnessing is nothing other than a blatant abuse of fundamental human rights." " We are only too well aware of what can happen when conditions deteriorate. I would call on all those who have supported Republican prisoners in the past to act now and not allow this appalling situation to continue."

## IRELAND TO UNITE in British Commonwealth

Bertie Ahern has opened consideration of Ireland rejoining the British Commonwealth, which it left almost fifty years earlier. The call came during a visit by British Prime Minister Tony Blair, in a week marked by news reports predicting Stormont Deal breakthroughs and initiatives, which never materialised.

### CONVENTION

The week began with headlines that an Irish Republican Army special convention would be held, in advance of the Blair visit. The story was broken by Ed Moloney, northern editor of the Sunday Tribune, and carried by other papers.

The purpose of such a convention, Moloney reported, would be to empower the Army Council, and presumably Sinn Fein to negotiate the decommissioning of arms.

Prior to 1996, the control and authority over weapons held by the IRA was vested in the Army Council. During the 1996 convention the IRA constitution was amended to prohibit any decommissioning or disposal or weaponry without either a British withdrawal or prior approval at a special convention.

These constitutional safeguards were retained even after a number of delegates instrumental in securing the amendments resigned and were speculated to have joined Oglaiha na hEireann.

### BLOCK

With Stormont Chief David Trimble demanding a surrender of arms before allowing any cross-border bodies or shadow executive, Sinn Fein was pressured to accede to some decommissioning initiative to be announced during the Blair visit.

Coincidentally Bertie Ahern during his Fianna Fail Party convention suggested that there was "an irresistible dynamic" towards unification, which he speculated he would see within his lifetime. There might be a referendum in fifteen to twenty years. Such a prediction, had it been issued during an army convention might have been intended to strengthen the hand of those advocating decommissioning.

### CANCELLED

However by week's end Moloney reported that the convention had been cancelled on Thursday or Friday and speculated that either the votes were not there to insure passage, or that proposals on executive places needed to be fleshed out before delegates could be counted upon to ratify such a move.

### BLAIR

Blair's visit which was preceded by speculation about a breakthrough or implementation of the Stormont Deal became more remarkable for how little of significance was said, than for how much.

Blair spoke in a manner, which can only be described as patronising. He alluded to his relations from Ballyshannon, his childhood holidays in Donegal and his first pint of Guinness, as if these were arguments for maintaining his government's rule in the north.

Blair then spoke about the shared history and shared pain between the people of Ireland and Britain. He omitted any reference to the fact that the shared historical relationship was one between British invader and Irish victim of invasion, or pain inflicted by his government upon unwilling Irish subjects.

He reminded those present, including representatives of the wider Republican family, " You have voted to end the territorial claim over Northern Ireland, essential to the Agreement."

Blair's discussion of the Stormont Deal deadlock consisted of more platitudes about implementing all parts of the deal including decommissioning. There was silence on any initiatives.

### COMMONWEALTH

During Blair's visit Ahern reopened debate about rejoining the British commonwealth. He did so on at least two occasions, and his call was echoed by at least one other senior Fianna Fail member.

Fianna Fail, had once derided Fine Gael as the "Commonwealth Party". The call was welcomed by Fine Gael head John Bruton.

The Secretary General of the British Commonwealth, Chief Emeka Anyaoka said he was "greatly encouraged". He is scheduled to visit Ireland in December.

### TRIMBLE

Trimble curtly dismissed the prospect of Ireland being rejoined with the six counties in a British Commonwealth headed by the British monarch, as something inconsequential to him.

He expressed confidence that the Irish and British governments would put irresistible pressure on the IRA to surrender some weapons. Trimble's boast at the very least reflects the absence of any concern that he would be pressured by the two governments.

It is believed that Trimble is willing to appoint a ten member executive, including two Sinn Fein representatives counter-balanced by two Democratic Unionist Party members. Trimble's Ulster Unionists with the SDLP would have three representatives each.

Trimble would also be in a position to further marginalise Sinn Fein by allocating departments which did not impinge on British interests and by vetoing any moves of potential significance.

### REACTION

The 32 County Sovereignty Movement reacted as follows to the spiralling pressure for decommissioning:

"We are urging those within the wider Republican family not to be party to what will be claimed and symbolise a surrender of weapons and of the Republican struggle against British rule"

"No matter what pap is floated to make this more politically sellable, the reality will be that Republicans are becoming more deeply enmeshed in the British Stormont Deal strategy designed to serve British rule and British interests."

"Decommissioning is but the first use of a loyalist strategy we will see again and again. Trimble no doubt has already devised a series of preconditions such as disbanding the IRA etc, which he will use with British connivance to obstruct, water down and veto any real change in the system of loyalist privilege so essential to British rule."

"Meanwhile the purported acceptance of British rule and the highly public involvement of prominent Republicans in a British administration will be trumpeted by the British to give a veneer of legitimacy for their Stormont Administration in Ireland."

### IMPLICATION

The British objectives in the Stormont Deal strategy were to secure and acceptance of British rule and a loyalist veto. Having garnered a purported recognition of British hegemony in the Stormont Deal, the British now see their Prime Minister being applauded in Leinster House by an audience which includes representatives of the wider Republican family. The head of Irish government proposes consideration of rejoining the British Commonwealth.

A continued scenario to make the surrender of Republican arms seem inescapable is pursued. Trimble will be positioned to block any movement on the equality or human rights agenda, and to demand concession after concession before allowing prominent representatives of the wider Republican family an irrelevant place in the cabinet he will control.

Unfounded claims of a united Ireland can be trotted up when necessary to ease the acceptance of troubling concessions by nationalists.

The Stormont Deal is not the way to a united Ireland. Such developments came days after nationalists in Tyrone and South Armagh were threatened by British patrols. Could the welcome accorded the head of a government which continues to rule a portion of Ireland have been forthcoming without the seal of approval given by representatives of the wider Republican family who set out to end and now seek to minister British rule?

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# DONEGAL CELTIC CONTROVERSY

## Controversy

Much of the pub and black taxi conversation recently has evolved around the controversy over whether Donegal Celtic Football Club should play the RUC in the Steele and Sons cup semi-final. The media have continuously reported on threats allegedly from the IRA having being

made against a number of players, none of it substantiated. Many people have went public to air their view on the issue and consequently the wider community have a better appreciation of what is at stake.

## Question

One must question the collective wisdom prevailing at Donegal Celtic these days. Only days previous to the clubs decision to play the RUC. West Belfast played host to the Patton Commission on the future of the force. The animosity expressed against the RUC was widely reported in all the Newspapers. Are we to believe that Donegal Celtic members only read Police Beat which is hardly renowned for its critical attitude to the policing question? And did Donegal Celtic really believe that such sentiment would be cast aside for ninety minutes in order to pretend that the RUC were indeed only sportsmen? Or did they simply opt to trample that sentiment into the ground under the studs of their players boots in the callous manner in which some club members insulted grieving protesters?

## Moral Pressure

It comes as no surprise that many in West Belfast and in the Lenadoon estate in particular have viewed Donegal Celtic as strikers view scabs who cross the picket line. A picket line populated by the relatives of victims of RUC death squads. In such circumstances it is quite legitimate to forcefully apply moral pressure to those behaving as scabs. It is another matter entirely to behave forcibly. Indeed it would be an absurdity if violence or threats of such were to be applied to the players or anyone else associated with the club. The only victory achieved would be one of force over the Donegal Celtic,

certainly not one of the community over the brutal RUC. In any event it is wholly illogical to make "legitimate targets" of people for playing football against other people who themselves are no longer "legitimate targets".

## Sinister Implications

We have witnessed two strands in the critique of the Donegal Celtic, one moral the other political. Mark Thompson of Relatives for Justice put the moral case on Radio Ulster's "Talkback" programme. His case was powerful, his logic incisive. On the same show Alex Maskey of Sinn Fein put the political case. Unlike Thompson he was pedestrian and cumbersome. Maskey himself was not to blame for that - he was left to present a political argument which had lost its moral thrust. Sinn Fein while undoubtedly correct to question the judgement of Donegal Celtic seemed oblivious to a major inconsistency in its own position. The Sinn Fein argument against playing the RUC is weakened considerably when the party itself sits down for dinner in the British embassy in Brussels, an act which in the eyes of many has much more sinister implications than the Donegal Celtic decision.

## British State

The change of heart or mind by Donegal Celtic while welcome must not be viewed by anyone as a victory over the club. Such triumphalism is as shallow as it is irrelevant. The real opponents here are the British state and the RUC. Republicans should support the right of Donegal

Celtic to go as far in any competition as their skill permits them. To do that they must effectively think of ways in which to prevent RUC participation in such events. Failing that this issue and others like it will come to haunt us in the years ahead.

Anthony McIntyre.  
Republican Writers Group

# CROWN FORCES HARRASSMENT ESCALATES



Crown Forces

On Sunday November 22nd, in the village of Silverbridge, South Armagh a confrontation between local people and six British soldiers and RUC officers resulted in shots being fired.

Initial British RUC reports claimed that 20 local South Armagh men came out of a bar and surrounded them and "began to kick and punch members of the patrol", who the RUC stated "tried to get away but were continually assaulted." "it was feared members of the patrol were in danger" of being "abducted by the crowd" the RUC statement read. Two alleged "warning shots" were fired towards a nearby field and then the patrol moved into the field from where it was airlifted to safety retreating with several of its members cut and bruised.

Locals claim that members of the Royal Marines along with RUC officers had verbally abused the men and threatened to "take a number of locals out" before they finished their tour. making verbal threats and intimidating the locals as they went about their "business." One person described that when people went out to investigate what all the commotion was about, the patrol opened fire indiscriminately nearly hitting some of those, who immediately fled in terror.

Locals stated to newspapers that the shots fired by the RUC had narrowly missed the crowd.

In a report in the Irish News stated that one of the men, a 20-year-old young man who had been in the pub claimed he had been hit in the chest by a cartridge shell stating "We all thought we were going to be killed."

In another incident in Co Armagh, in the

town of Lurgan, the RUC was again reported to have fired plastic bullets in another confrontation with about 50 residents in the nationalist Kilwilkie Estate on Sunday night.

The incident also reportedly followed the evacuation of a local Gaelic Athletics Association or GAA club, a youth club and residential houses on Lake Street after a report was released of a suspect device outside the GAA club premises which later turned out an elaborate hoax. The RUC gave again a thin statement stating it fired several baton rounds only after coming under petrol bomb attack. Fortunately in this incident no one was reported injured.

These incidents are part of an ongoing campaign of harassment by the British forces against nationalist people in the six counties. South Armagh and Tyrone have been particularly subjected to continuous harassment.

The firing of live and baton rounds comes in the wake of calls from a United Nations human rights committee for the "reconstruction" of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, the banning of plastic bullets, and the rapid closure of Castlereagh and other RUC interrogation centres.

The report, by the UN Committee Against Torture, comes just as the future of the RUC has become one the most contentious political issues in the North.

A spokesperson for the 32 County Sovereignty Movement said "Reconstruction of the RUC is not the answer, this problem cannot not be glossed over with cosmetic changes. We want to see an end to British rule in Ireland not restructured"



Dissenter Toons 1998

# ARRESTS IN DROGHEDA

**Eight members of Republican Sinn Fein were arrested in Drogheda following the party's Ard Fheis. The arrests, which included the party's vice-president, editor of its paper and an elected councillor, appeared to be part of a pattern of cross-border repression designed to stifle political opposition to the Stormont Deal.**

## RADIO

The arrests occurred as the individuals travelled home from the Ard Fheis. Donegal Councillor Joe O'Neill was taken out of a car and his wife jostled by Gardai. Mr. O'Neill in his interrogation by Gardai, was threatened

with prosecution. Tapes from an American radio program WBAI were played and he was told the statements made could be introduced in court.

Ironically a tape of the Pearse speech at O'Donovan Rossa's grave, which was heard as part of the introduction of the program, was a key element of the threatened legal action. Gardai threatened that the speech ending with the quote "Ireland unfree will never be at peace" might be a basis for prosecution. After some time when Mr. O'Neill revealed the through source of the quote the embarrassed Gardai moved on.

Among others arrested were party Vice-President Des Long, party newspaper editor Rory Og O'Bradaigh and Eamon Larkin. The

arrests were followed by extensive house searches and damage to homes both north and south of the border.

The home of Joseph Mallon in County Westmeath was most severely damaged and holes were spiked into walls and ceilings in addition to breaking the doors.

The 32 County Sovereignty Movement reacted strongly as follows:

"The recent arrests of members of Republican Sinn Fein is clearly designed to suppress debate and criticism of the Stormont Deal."

"This is just the latest in a pattern of activities, in which those who point out that the pledges of the Stormont Deal have turned hollow while the British have gained for the first time a public involvement and acceptance of a

British Stormont administration by some representatives of the wider Republican family."

"The Irish people are entitled to hear the arguments against the Stormont Deal. These arrests and similar acts of oppression are a clear admission that the Stormont Deal cannot be defended in an open debate."

"It is bad enough that these methods have always been employed by the British, it is doubly sad to see these tactics implemented at the behest of the British by an Irish administration with the reintroduction of the "Heavy Gang".

"The 32 County Sovereignty Movement call for an end to the harassment and censorship of those opposed to the Stormont Deal and call for the immediate release of these Republicans."



# TRIMBLE VETOES HALLOWEEN DEADLINES

Stormont chief David Trimble jettisoned the crucial Halloween, October 31st deadline for the establishment of shadow executive and cross-border bodies. Predictably Trimble used de-commissioning to discard the timetable negotiated in the Stormont Deal as "bunkum". Without British government challenge, the October absolute deadlines were watered down to possible February target dates. Are Republicans now seeing a portent of what the Stormont Deal really means as this scenario is applied to nullify all of the pledges and deadlines of the equality and human rights agenda?

## DEBATE

The importance of the discarded Halloween deadlines must not be overlooked by Republicans. During the debate within the wider Republican family, the provisions for fixed deadlines and a schedule of commitments were trumpeted as a major achievement. Those who argued that the Stormont Deal should be endorsed by Republicans and would lead to a united Ireland claimed that the implementation of the equality and human rights agenda would undermine the sectarian system propping up British rule. The fixed deadlines and timetables would guarantee tangible progress. These deadlines ensured that now nationalists would receive more than the hollow platitudes and empty promises of past British declarations. Republicans outside of the Stormont Deal predicted a starkly different scenario. Britain's Stormont Deal strategy was designed to secure British rule. Once the British succeeded in entrapping Republican representatives into accepting British hegemony and becoming highly visible members of a Stormont Administration, they would then simply play the orange card. Trimble and the loyalist majority at Stormont would obstruct, water and ultimately veto any meaningful changes, which seriously threatened loyalist ascendancy. The British meanwhile would be insulated from international pressure. They would point to Stormont and the Loyalists as the roadblock. In reality Trimble's demands would go unchallenged because he would be serving British interests.

## MEASURE

The Halloween deadline was therefore a crucial measuring stick of British bona fides. Would Trimble and the Loyalists refuse even the meager preliminary step of naming appointees to a shadow cabinet headed by him?

More importantly would the British and Irish governments repudiate any attempt to discard the timetables of the Stormont Deal? Would the British communicate privately and publicly, if need be, that such actions would be treated as an unacceptable breach of the deal or an interpretation that would not be tolerated.

## SIGNAL

Trimble's intentions were clearly signaled. He publicly and repeatedly demanded de-commissioning by the Irish Republican Army before allocating any cabinet post to any Sinn Fein representative. He did so in terms so unequivocal and categorical as to rule out any concern about any challenge by the British or Irish governments.

De-commissioning is of course a sham issue. No one seriously challenges the bona fides of the IRA cessation. Trimble seeks what he will later claim as a concrete gesture of surrender and tangible proof that Irish opposition to British rule has been ended.

Trimble however sees de-commissioning as the first in a series of pre-conditions or pretexts to block any real consideration much less movement on the equality or human rights agenda. The Ulster Unionist Party and the loyalist majority are the beneficiaries of the system of sectarian privilege underpinning British rule.

## PUBLIC

During the Conservative Party Conference at Bournemouth, Trimble proclaimed that it would be convenient but unnecessary to have a shadow executive before a transfer of power to Stormont, and that we would have to wait for de-commissioning.

During his American investment tour, in the company of British direct ruler Mo Mowlam, Trimble pushed de-commissioning as a precondition, which must be met.

At his party conference, Trimble boasted the de-commissioning pre-condition was "indispensable.... Could anything be clearer?...an obligation that those seeking office must satisfy."

In words he addressed to the "republican leadership" Trimble said, "the message is simple. You know in your hearts you must go down this road. There is no other way." The deadlines were "bunkum".

Trimble's intentions were clear. The question was whether the British would respond with a bang of repudiation, or a whimper of acquiescence. Moreover the British would not whimper unless it served British interests to publicly reintroduce a loyalist veto.

## PARKED

Trimble discarded the crucial deadlines. It was spun that the deadlines had only been a target date. February might now be a possibility.

The issue was parked until what would be presented as a gesture and later claimed as a concrete surrender could be sought. The prestigious Sunday Business Post of November 1 would headline its story "Dublin joins with London in putting squeeze on Sinn Fein."

Beattie would visit Stormont but the photographs alongside a smiling David Trimble and Seamus Mallon conveyed anything but pressure on the loyalists.

The deadlines were discarded without apparent consequences. What would this mean for future deadlines, timetables, and talks? If meagre nominations can be vetoed, what can be expected when there are real equality or human rights issues threatening loyalist interests at stake?

## BELFAST NATIONALIST MURDERED AS U.V.F. REJECTS DECOMMISSIONING

A north Belfast nationalist became the latest victim of loyalist sectarian violence, slain by paramilitaries using the cover name of Red Hand Defenders. Meanwhile Billy Hutchinson categorically rejected any decommissioning of Ulster Volunteer Force weapons.

### RANDOM

Mr. Brian Service, who was returning home after visiting his brother who was murdered shortly after the same loyalist gang had opened fire on a nationalist owned bar. Mr. Service had no known political involvement and was targeted at random because his route earmarked him as a nationalist.

### LINKED

The new name is linked to a number of loyalist paramilitary groupings including the Red Hand Commandos, Ulster Defence Association and Ulster Volunteer Association who all claim to have been on

a cease-fire since October 1995. The murder coincided with the October 31st, Stormont Deal deadline for the appointment of a shadow cabinet and was seen to heighten nationalist fears and mute any outcry over the broken pledges.

### CEASE-FIRE

The new loyalist gang may be an amalgamation drawing members from the various loyalist groupings, or may be a name short of convenience formally linked to the main loyalist paramilitary groups but allowing them to cover to maintain the cease-fire.

### UVF

Meanwhile Billy Hutchinson rejected any decommissioning of UVF weapons until such time as what he termed "Republican tyranny" was ended. It was reported by Frank Connolly of the Sunday Business Post, that Hutchinson, who has conducted talks with

representatives of the wider Republican family, claimed a sharp distinction between the understandings of Sinn Fein and the Irish Republican Army over the Stormont Deal.

"Sinn Fein believe the armed struggle is over and we are clear about that. What we are not clear about is what the rest of the Republicans think, and we mean the armed wings who are waiting to see what the outcome is."

"I would imagine that if the armed wings of Republicanism feel that they are all going to get out of this is a bit of equality and a couple of north-south structures and implementation bodies dealing with animals, plants, health and welfare, they are certainly not going to accept that."

### MOWLAM

Hutchinson in television interviews also advised nationalists in north Belfast to be on their guard from attacks, which he ascribed to the Loyalist

Volunteer Force splinter group. British direct ruler Mo Mowlam meanwhile accepted the UVF cease-fire and the group is under consideration to have its 22 prisoners released.

### MONITORED

While the true relationship between the Red Hand Defenders and other loyalist paramilitary groups remains unclear, the threat of loyalist sectarian murder gangs under which nationalists must live is very clear. Whether this tactic will be used to quell nationalist's protests as Trimble vetoes future Stormont Deal pledges and deadlines must be watched carefully.

Meanwhile a number of nationalists in Belfast who had complained about the Royal Ulster Constabulary to the Patten Commission were told loyalists might be targeting them.

# STATE SIDE FENIAN VIEW

BY  
MARTIN  
GALVIN

The MacBride Principles Campaign against religious employment discrimination in the north of Ireland received two major boosts this month. The import was such that the matter was raised during parliamentary question time, and British minister Adam Ingram pledged a new government effort to combat this key American campaign. No doubt the Stormont Deal strategy will be utilised to blunt American involvement in seeking objectives which were ostensibly accepted by the British under the Stormont Deal terms. The MacBride Campaign remains crucial, not only because of what it reveals about Britain's true intentions but also as a tactical study to be incorporated into the Republican alternative to the Stormont Deal.

## Background

The MacBride Principles is of course an American campaign directed against sectarian employment discrimination, which was adapted from the Sullivan Principles in South Africa. The principles themselves are a series of measures striking at direct employment discrimination, intimidating work environment, recruitment practices, etc.

The campaign was initiated by new York City Comptroller Harrison Goldin in 1985, after staff advisor Jon Cudahy spotted a local newspaper column which commended the successes of the Sullivan Principles in compelling American owned companies to stop profiting from apartheid and racial employment discrimination in South Africa.

The columnist posed the question why not a similar campaign in the north of Ireland. Goldin instinctively recognised that American companies with substantial subsidiaries of investments in the north of Ireland had hired local managerial personnel who implemented customary local hiring practices. These practices translated into nationalist unemployment rates being more than double the rates for loyalists.

Comptroller Goldin enlisted civil rights attorney Paul O'Dwyer and Fr. Sean McManus who suggested Nobel Prize winner Sean McBride be invited to endorse and give name to the campaign. Dr. John Robb, Inez McCormack and Fr. Brian Brady became original signatories of the principles.

Goldin then sought support and participation from key Irish activist organisations. He also assigned Patrick Doherty to become an invaluable strategist, co-ordinator, activist and lobbyist for the campaign.

## Reformism

Oddly enough there was an initial hesitation among some Sinn Fein members about the campaign. Some were concerned that MacBride Campaign would be reformism, improving British rule but diverting attention away from the question of national sovereignty.

The counter argument made by this writer among others was that British rule was incapable of doing away with sectarian employment discrimination. The British are supported by loyalists because loyalists benefit from sectarian privilege in employment, patronage and position. Measures which strike at the sectarian system would strike at the heart of British rule and highlight the true nature of their regime.

Irish Northern Aid became integral to the campaign and Sinn Fein became the first Irish political party to give the campaign backing.

## British Opposition

The British might have avoided difficulty by giving lip-service endorsement and simply doing nothing to enforce equality. The Thatcher government was not given to subtlety. The British condemned the MacBride Principles as an "IRA plot" and commenced a highly public opposition, enlisting some surprising allies.

The British claimed that discrimination was already illegal under British Fair Employment legislation. Token Catholics like Bob Cooper, Paddy Devlin, John Cushnahan and Sean Neeson would be trotted out to states and cities and paid to claim there was no sectarian discrimination in employment.

John Hume was induced to make a statement that the campaign would discourage American investment and should be opposed. The Irish Consulate staff acceded to their British counterparts and became a focal point of anti-MacBride efforts. Consulate personnel were against MacBride in the United States even after Charles Haughey as head of Fianna Fail administration endorsed the principles. The legislation in New York State was celebrated as a key defeat of the government by Irish Americans.

## Lobbying

The campaign grew. Comptroller Goldin was able to secure approval from the New York City Pension trustees to push justice for the North of Ireland. Councilman Sal Albanese presented a New York City Council Bill, while Assemblyman John Dearie would sponsor state legislation, which would be, supported by then Assemblyman now Comptroller Alan Hevesi. These bills would become models for states and cities across the United States.

## Rallying Point

Oliver Kearney who was victimised because he testified in support of a California MacBride Bill became a lynchpin for the campaign. He would be an eloquent witness, tireless campaigner and inspiring strategist. Americans who were reluctant to take a position on the armed struggle, comfortably began by supporting MacBride and subsequently became active on other issues when they understood why British rule opposed equality so vigorously. MacBride was a natural vehicle for legislative effort and a rallying point.

Irish national sovereignty was also paramount. In states like New York, Illinois, Connecticut, New Jersey, Ohio and Washington DC, this columnist gave testimony stressing that employment discrimination was fundamental to the system of British rule. Ultimately the MacBride Campaign became central to the Irish American Agenda and was endorsed by President Clinton during the 1992 Irish American Presidential Forum.

## Stormont Strategy

The British have already begun to apply the Stormont Deal strategy. The same platitudes that were contained in various Fair Employment Laws are now part of the Stormont Deal. We shall no doubt see commissions, reports, debates, and redefinitions of terms accompanied by pleas to give the Stormont Deal a chance.

It will be claimed that American investments should be sent. Already David Trimble has featured in one tour, asking for funds for

some companies, which are among the worst in discrimination. It will be claimed that representatives of the wider Republican family are now part of the British Stormont Administration, and there is now no further need for American pressure.

Meanwhile the sectarian system basic to loyalist interests and British rule will continue behind the cosmetic façade. Meanwhile the Orange card will be used to veto the equality agenda.

## Lessons

Recently the MacBride Campaign received two major boosts. Federal legislation pertaining to the International Fund mandated that the MacBride Principles be applied to the allocation of these monies. More importantly

Gray Davis, a staunch MacBride Principles supporter was elected governor of California. A MacBride Bill in California utilising the economic clout of the hundred billion-dollar pension fund could rejuvenate the campaign. Americans must continue to put economic pressure back on the British government and its sectarian system. American monies should not be allowed to subsidise injustice and the discrimination underpinning that rule. Nor should anyone allow more commissions, proposals and Stormont Deal lip service to be credited and substituted for real justice and national sovereignty.

If the British truly intended to allow justice on the equality agenda why did British Minister Adam Ingram express his government's pledge to fight the MacBride Principles?

## WITCH-HUNT CONTINUES OF REPUBLICANS

Noisy scenes in the chamber of Omagh District Council were experienced at the November council meeting as a motion calling for the resignation of Councillor Francis Mackey was debated.

The Motion put before the council by Labour Cllr Johnny Mc Loughlin seconded by Alliance Cllr Ann Gormley read, "Before public confidence in Omagh District Council is totally eroded, will Councillor Mackey do the honourable thing and tender his resignation and stand in a by election."

McLoughlin in proposing it said "Councillor Mackey had damaged the workings of the Council due to his public stand against the Stormont deal and had in effect forfeited any democratic rights due to his membership of the 32 County Sovereignty Movement."

Cllr Gormley of Alliance said, "Cllr Mackey had no mandate and should resign" Sinn Fein joined in the calling on Mackey to resign as he was no longer a member of their party and as he stood on a Sinn Fein ticket he should resign and they called on the other councillors to support a Sinn Fein co option.

Other councillors who spoke expressed their recognition of the service that Mackey had given the council over the past thirteen years. It was pointed out that the council had not the power to make a councillor resign. The Ulster Unionists and the DUP stated early in the proceedings that they would not be part of it. A number of councillors stated that they felt the proposals before the council were cheap stunts.

This sparked a reaction in

the public gallery from some relatives of the victims of the Omagh bomb, among them Mr. Laurence Rushe, who lost his wife. Mr. Rushe read a prepared statement, which the Sinn Fein Chairman Sean Clarke allowed, contrary to the standing orders of the Council.

As the debate continued Cllr Mackey expressed disappointment at the organised campaign against him by those calling for his resignation and questioned the real reason behind it and the legitimacy of such a motion which inferred he was dishonourable.

Stating clearly that he had condemned the bombing at the council meeting of 17 August and further stating to the world press that what happened at Omagh could not be justified under any circumstances. Cllr Mackey said it was clear that no matter what he said or done would have been twisted as the witch-hunt was on those who oppose the Partitionist Stormont Deal.

He claimed he was being victimised because he espoused peace through a British withdrawal.

Pointing clearly at Sinn Fein Cllr Mackey added it was hypocritical of their stand to support the call for his resignation given the fact that Sinn Fein had been the victim of such orchestrated campaigns in the past after tragedies such as Enniskillen, Shankill Road etc. Mackey pointed out to the Sinn Fein members that it was they who had broken and changed the Republican Constitution by taking seats in Stormont and agreeing to accept and minister British rule in the six counties maintained by a Unionist veto.



Following the debate the chairman put the motion to the floor, the original motion was lost with the amended one carried with only the support of Sinn Fein voting for it.

Speaking afterwards Cllr Mackey said, "this is indeed a sad evening to see Councillors using the bereaved and injured to scapegoat myself in this campaign of vilification. It was totally insensitive to the members of the council who had lost loved ones and totally uncalled for at this time."

Councillor Mackey said he would not be resigning from his seat, he would continue to oppose British rule in Ireland.

At a subsequent meeting Sinn Fein went a step further and moved to have Cllr. Mackey removed from outside bodies including community groups in Omagh Town which he had served for the last thirteen years.

Councillor Mackey said "This witch-hunt by former comrades continues to expose their hypocrisy and the hunger for power supersedes everything we have all struggled for over the years." He continued "It is becoming evident as each day passes that the Sinn Fein leadership find themselves between a rock and a hard place with no where to turn except deeper into administering British rule in Ireland".

# Mallon Tightens Screw for Provisional Surrender.

The Provisional's "Nationalist" allies the S.D.L.P through the words of Seamus Mallon at that party's annual conference have signalled their firm intention to ensure they play their part in forcing surrender from the Provisional movement.

Speaking of the scenario where decommissioning was opposed by the provisionals Mallon said in Newry "no one should have any doubt that if it did happen the S.D.L.P. would vigorously enforce the terms of the argument and remove from office those who had so blatantly dishonoured their obligations."

Republicans have become accustomed to the provisional movement jumping as one through the hoops set down for it by the British government.

The latest and saddest example of this is the Provisionals becoming in effect surrogates of the crown forces by issuing death threats against those who oppose British rule in Ireland. By doing so they are proving the British their bona fides regarding loyalty to the Stormont agreement.

The Decommissioning loop is of seminal importance, both in its practical and symbolic implications. Indeed the Provisionals themselves in their document titled "Building a Permanent Peace" acknowledged the following: "It has been argued that the British government is simply asking for a symbolic gesture and an acceptance of responsibility for 25 years of war. But it is a gesture which would symbolise an IRA surrender."

The enemies of Irish national Sovereignty and freedom are only too well aware of this reality

and hence their frenzy to see decommissioning come to pass.

The Provisionals in the above quoted document discussed the different "modalities" of decommissioning which had been suggested and had the following to say: "... we believe that as part of a peace settlement, the disposal of arms by those in possession of them is a method which may find acceptance."

Having given such a signal of intent are they really surprised at the predicament they find themselves in?

The Decommissioning issue has also exposed the logic presented by the Provisionals for accepting the Stormont agreement. We were given the flawed argument that a unified nationalism would challenge the British presence in return for accepting the unionist veto, stormont rule, the release of prisoners as "criminals" etc.

So what have the Provisionals new "friends" done to help them escape the decommissioning hook they find themselves impaled on? Geraldine Kennedy of the Irish Times reported on 5/11/98 the "the Taoiseach, Mr Ahern has given his strongest signal to date that some decommissioning will have to accompany the setting up of the executive in Northern Ireland." Further on in her report Kennedy says "asked if he could foresee an executive operating under the d'hondt system 'without a gesture or movement', Mr Ahern replied "The answer is that I cannot foresee such an eventuality".

Meanwhile prior to his party conference speech Seamus Mallon of the S.D.L.P had

made the position clear when he said on 10/11/98, "every single nationalist party in Ireland has demanded publicly that decommissioning takes place. We stand by that."

Thus the Provisionals find themselves being pressured by their "allies" to deliver what they themselves have accepted would be surrender.

The British government seems quite happy that the Provisionals will come up trumps again. After a meeting between Blair and Gerry Adams on 9/11/98, a spokesman for Blair stated "it was clear when the Prime Minister met Gerry Adams that as far as they are concerned they are speaking for Sinn Fein, and what the agreement says is that they have to use their influence in whatever way they can to push forward on all the issues, including decommissioning. The question is whether you think Martin McGuinness and Sinn Fein are doing what they can, and our view is that they are."

The real significance of the above quote is that later the same day Mr Blair's spokesman confirmed Blair's view that Sinn Fein and PIRA "are linked and the two sides of the one coin." The implications are clear.

What are Mr. Ahern and the Dublin government's attitude to the British forces of occupation?

In early October days after David Andrews visited South Armagh to hear of British forces harassment and saturation patrolling, the Department of Foreign Affairs give permission for a British army surveillance aircraft to fly almost a mile into north Louth for half an hour.

Having miscalculated their co-option of the Provisional movement as defeat of Republican resistance, the British establishment seems ever more determined to as they would perceive it hammer Republican morale and determination, and signal opposition to their rule as futile. This agenda can best be seen with

the Clegg retrial, the reinstatement of Fisher and Wright, and the appointment at what we are told is such a "sensitive time" of a member of the Parachute regiment as the new GOC of British occupation forces.

When considering the decommissioning issue, there is the very immediate and practical matter of the defence of Nationalist areas. Many Republicans throughout the six-counties are fully aware that on many occasions were it not for the presence of armed volunteers of the Irish Republican Army their areas would have come under murderous attack.

A very tragic reminder of the constant threat Nationalists live under from loyalist death squads, was the recent murder of Brian Service. What nationalists can not have failed to be struck by was the contemptible coverage the media gave this murder.

Further issues that need to be factored into Nationalist thinking on Decommissioning include, the announcement at a recent P.U.P. conference that the U.V.F have no intention of decommissioning. Again this stark announcement got scant attention from those who are usually so concerned about matters relating to "violence".

Mo Mowlam has announced that the British government is to "recognise" the "cease-fire" of the L.V.F. This will lead to the release of their prisoners.

Most disturbing of all is the emergence of the so-called "Red Hand Defenders" as a new front for Loyalist terror. Political reaction to this regrouping of loyalist death squads, exactly, what reaction!

Nationalists in the six-counties must be on their guard they do not allow themselves revisit the nightmare of being at the mercy of an alliance of Crown forces and loyalist death squads.

## IRISH REPUBLICAN P.O.W.'S

Prisoners who are not going home to their families this Christmas, letters or cards should be addressed to:

### PORTLAOISE PRISON

Pascal Burke (married)

rried)

Danny McAllister (married)

Saoirse Breatnach (single)

gle)

Stephen Carney

Philip Forsyth (single)

Kieran McDonagh (married)

Paddy McDonagh (married)

(We apologise for omitting any names, it is not intentional. We would appreciate current updates please.)

*The 32 County Sovereignty  
Movement extends  
Christmas Greetings  
to all Irish  
Republican POW's  
at home and abroad.*

### LIMERICK

Josephine Hayden (mar-

BELMARSH (England)

Tony Hyland (sin-



## SHOULD'VE KNOWN

A few years ago the assumption was that there would be a reunification of Ireland. It was only a matter of when and what the terms would be. That was the assumption because the Nationalist numbers and support for a united Ireland abroad told us so.

But some leaders in the Republican community warned that the process was headed in the wrong direction. Bernadette Devlin McAliskey in an article entitled "Where are we now in the Peace Process" for the Irish Reporter in 1996 contested the idea that the peace process was going anywhere: "Getting where? I am 'rural', born and bred for generations, from the peat, stone, heather, brown water, easy walk and contrary, independent mind of Tyrone. I am a woman, a socialist, an anti-clerical dissenter, whose entire adult life was, and is absorbed in this struggle. I am nearly 49 years old. I am not intellectually incapable of understanding the peace process. I understand it, and I reject it, because it has from its embryonic stages in the original Dublin Forum, created by CJ Haughey, and the resulting Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1985, been a process whose aim is to eradicate republicanism, not violence."

The Mitchell Document itself was and is a usurpation of the rights of the Irish people to govern their own nation stemming from the deference to British military and economic interests. Such deference ignores the partition of Ireland by force and the suppression of the legitimate all Ireland Dail. The Mitchell Document and the concomitant "Bad Friday" agreement was not authored by the Irish people but by foreign interests and then handed to the people as their only chance for lasting peace with justice. McAliskey further stated: "I reject this process, because it cannot and will not lead towards the achievement of any of the noble, just, democratic ideals for which people gave their liberty and their lives, and took other people's lives. Nor will it lead to the peaceful resolution of the historic conflict on this island, or between these islands."

This process is nothing more than a realignment of the interface of the two power blocs in Northern Ireland, unionism and nationalism, within the United Kingdom. The end of this process is a 'power-sharing' assembly, several cross-border boards, and a referendum every 10 years, or every 20. That has been British policy since Darlington 1972. (And also SDLP policy since 1972.)"

Traditional Republicans cannot accept the process because acceptance would require accepting a legitimacy of British rule in Ireland. But the Provisional Sinn Fein leadership did accept this by signing on to the

agreement and participating in Stormont, British government. Now they are reaping their reward. They have submitted to British government and exist under the same Unionist veto as before the agreement. And commenting on the increased strength of anti-agreement Unionists Gerry Adams stated: "If you pander to unionism, unionism will say no."

The referendum result showed people want change." On the news that some anti-Agreement candidates received increased support, Mr. Adams responded: "this shows we are living in an apartheid state, with some negativism and the vestige of racism, and we have to deal with that reality." (Irish Times, Nov. 26)

The referendum result obviously reflected a desire for change. But it was not a mandate for British rule and certainly not a mandate for extending British rule into the south. Is Mr. Adams' idea of dealing with reality signing on to and supporting the continued "apartheid, negative, and racist British state? Because that is where he and others in the Provisional Sinn Fein leadership have led their supporters. In doing so, it should not be surprising that they too have engaged in suppressing free speech and democratic debate. They have become part and parcel with that state. Is this the kind of change they promised. Certainly not. The Ahern government may also be called into question since it has signed on to and is in support of continued British rule in the north, leaving Nationalist people out in the cold. In addition to police state tactics being employed in the name of peace, Ahern is willing to entertain even stronger British power over the south by a return of the Republic to the Commonwealth.

Chris Parkin, PA News, wrote on November 25: A possible return to the Commonwealth by the Republic of Ireland will be a surprise item on the agenda for talks in Dublin tomorrow between the Prime Minister and his Irish counterpart Bertie Ahern. Mr. Ahern confirmed, in an interview with The Times, that the issue was up for discussion at his meeting with Mr. Blair. He told the newspaper he would not "certainly not be suppressing" a debate over time within Ireland about rejoining the Commonwealth.

Is this surprising? It is but it should not be. These days it seems the Irish people continue to be cast as second class and incapable of governing their own land and defining what is best for their country and its people. They must remain silent and only be permitted to rubber stamp issues that have already been decided for them. The Irish people wanted change and were told they were getting change. But nothing is changing. It is the same. And we should have known.

## IRISH REPUBLICAN WELFARE ASSOC.

Support the dependents of Irish Republican Prisoners by Sending contributions to:

A.I.B. Bank DUNDALK Co. Louth

Account number 58130183

# EDITORIAL

As a political body opposed to the Stormont deal we in the 32 County Sovereignty Movement are constantly being urged by pro-Stormont elements to see the "bigger picture"

We believe the infamous "bigger picture" screams out at anyone who is willing to see it, namely that British rule has been copperfastened and unique to the history of Irish Republicanism it will be policed and implemented by people still claiming to be Republicans.

It will help to explain our position by quoting what Bertie Ahern a "pillar" of the "alliance" we were told would bring about Republican goals, sees as the "bigger picture"

Speaking recently in Dublin to executives of IBEC and the CBI, Ahern said "It will be difficult in the future for anyone to adopt the reductionist position that Britain equals England or London, which created all sorts of difficulties in the past. In future Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland will have a political personality of their own."

There can be no misunderstanding of what Ahern is saying here, or by extension of where the Stormont road is leading. How did this sorry state of affairs come to pass with Sinn Fein as a central element?

An understanding of the psychology at work among can best be understood by taking a long hard look at their recent behaviour in Stormont and in Omagh Council chamber.

In Stormont David Trimble, ex- Vanguard, present member of Portadown Lodge, a man whose name appears twenty five times in the index to, "the Committee: Political Assassination in N.Ireland"; received a standing ovation from Sinn Fein in acknowledgement of his "work for peace".

Contrast this with the witch-hunt against Councillor Francie Mackey, which culminated a few short weeks after Trimble's adulation, in Sinn Fein trying to force Cllr. Mackey from Omagh Council. When the vote was taken on forcing Cllr. Mackey to resign, the only party that voted in favour sadly was Sinn Fein.

Francie Mackey, a life long Republican and a man who has served his community both in his daily work and his political activity did not deserve such treatment.

The Stormont Deal has become an end in itself for representatives of the wider Republican family. Why they have chosen to behave as they do may best be understood in the context of the reasons given for Chuck Feeney ending his funding of FOSF in the United States.

The complete lack of direction of the representatives of the wider Republican family is being greeted with glee and uncontained amusement by the mainstream media. An example of this was a report by Deaglan de Breadun in the Irish Times 11/11/98 in which he says "mainstream unionists were at last able to see the funny side of Sinn Fein members trooping into the sumptuous residence of the British ambassador in the heart of Brussels for dinner."

Donegal Celtic players must wonder at the world they live in.

We in the 32 County Sovereignty Movement take this opportunity to extend our solidarity to those members of Republican Sinn Fein who were arrested coming from their annual Ard fheis. The timing and location of these detentions were a blatant attempt to silence political expression.

The renowned human rights activist Sr. Majella McCarron writing in January of this year captured the essence of what Irish Republicans must work towards in the months and years ahead, she wrote "Equality: I do not plead to be equal; I am equal. The issue is about my rights and not about my equality. I have political rights: to be a full citizen of an Irish Republic.

My political rights have their own integrity and value. I struggle in their pursuit."

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### KING AND COUNTRY

Dear Sir

This month sees the 80th Anniversary of the ending of the "Great War" on the bloodiest conflicts in human history. This was to be "the war to end all wars" or so the poor souls who fought and died were led to believe.

What makes this year's commemoration different, is what I believe, the successful efforts to once again rewrite Irish history and portray to the people that the British weren't that bad after all.

Undoubtedly Irishmen in many cases left these shores believing John Redmond's words and promises that they were going to "fight for the freedom of small nations" and they did that for Belgium and Holland etc. but as events at home showed not for Ireland's freedom.

The reality of the Great War and other subsequent wars was that the soldiers who fought and died and whom were commemorated by President Mary McAleese were serving members of the British army first and foremost and Irishmen secondly. Indeed one need look no further than the organisation whose responsibility it was to organise the commemoration - the British Legion.

It was not the sacrifices of the Somme etc which laid the foundation stone of the modern Irish nation, but the sacrifices of the men and women of Easter

week 1916 who refused to serve "neither King or Kaiser" but instead fought for an Irish Republic.

There can be no distinction between the British soldiers who died in Great war and the British Lancers who died in front of the G.P.O. or the Black and Tans who perished at Kilmichael, they all were serving their King and country.

Ironically what John Redmond wanted, Sinn Fein have settled for now under the Stormont Deal and that was home rule within the union. The sight of President Mary McAleese and the Queen of England standing shoulder to shoulder at the Somme memorial symbolised for me what the Stormont Agreement is about, the coming together of the four strands of the United Kingdom and laying of the ground for re-entry into the Commonwealth, similar to South Africa.

Yours sincerely,  
R. Dougan  
Dundalk

### REVISIONIST BRAIN WASHING CONTINUES

Sir,

The ending of Section 32 censorship in RTE saw no real effort by the national broadcaster to make up for the factual gaps in the record of our past. This is evidenced in the almost totally one-

side coverage of the circumstances of participation by the Irish Nation in World War I.

The one-sided revisionist brain-washing continues this November even in new forms like the commissioning of obviously biased independent productions and even a petty little religious reflection which manifestly failed to even suggest we should pray for all victims of violence, or even for people who were foolish enough to go and spill their blood "For Christianity", not to mention "King and country"!

I am much more concerned about the relative lack of commemoration we see of those brave Irish merchant seamen who kept vital lines of trade open in the early 1940s between, say, Limerick and neutral Spain and Portugal.

These brave servants of this neutral State ensured the supply of such basic medical requirements as oranges in boats that were little better than tubs with engines. They had nothing to protect them other than three buckets of green, white, and orange paint which they poured down the side of their ships before leaving.

Why should an allegedly non-political person such as Uachtarán na hÉireann get involved in something which, we now understand, consisted of the two English speaking Heads of State in Europe's offshore islands "jointly unveiling" a memorial on the soil of Belgium in the presence of the King of the Belgians?

It is further alleged that the "memorial honours the Irish dead of all traditions".

I hope it does - including those Irish who fought for Germany and Austria.

Not to mention the majority of Irish Catholics and Protestants who did so in the uniforms of Australia, not to mention the USA and Canada when they turned the tide for the British in 1917!

We are told in the RTE Guide that "Queen Elizabeth and the King of Belgium (sic) attended the ceremony." But most serious of all, we are told that the memorial location was chosen as the site for the commemoration tower "because it was there, in June 1917, that Irishmen from North and South of the country fought together and achieved a famous victory".

Over whom, it does not state. Presumably because we do not wish to be so obviously insulting to the Germans who continue to pay for most of our newly found EU Celtic Tiger loot.

The ongoing dirge about failure to honour "what took place 80 years ago" will have to be balanced by historical reality.

In December 1918, the Irish people gave their clear verdict on all this, in a General Election, leading, the following month, January 1919, the establishment of a self-governing 32-county Irish Republic, in accordance with the wishes of the vast majority of the people.

But where are the big plans for RTE documentaries, not to mention celebrations by our bilingual President of these truly historic events, as part of any honest calculation of the Ireland we know today?

### SURRENDER

A Chara,

If confirmation was needed of exactly the position the Irish people have put themselves in with the encouragement and deception of their leaders, then one should look no further than the speech given by British Prime Minister Tony Blair to the Oireachtas on Thursday 26 November 1998, in which he states: "You have voted to end the territorial claim over Northern Ireland, essential to the Agreement." "Just as we must understand your yearning for a united Ireland, so too must you understand what the best of Unionism is about. They are good and decent people, just like you. They want to remain part of the UK - and I have made it clear that I value that wish."

In effect Irish people living in the six counties have become an ethnic minority in a part of Britain, laughed and jeered at when they speak their native language, treated with contempt when they raise the issue of self determination.

What awaits us now, the added humiliation of giving a symbolic gesture of surrender by the Irish Republican Army and the re-entry to the commonwealth? Republican leaders soon to become ministers of the crown ministering British rule in Ireland, encouraging their people to join a British police force which will as sure as night follows day turn on its own people when the need arises.

We need to remind ourselves of what this was all about, and why it was that men like Tone, Pearse and Sands fought and died - it was for an Independent, Sovereign 32 County Irish Republic.

Sean O Sé  
Gaillimh

Is Mise  
Nora Fitzsimons  
Belfast

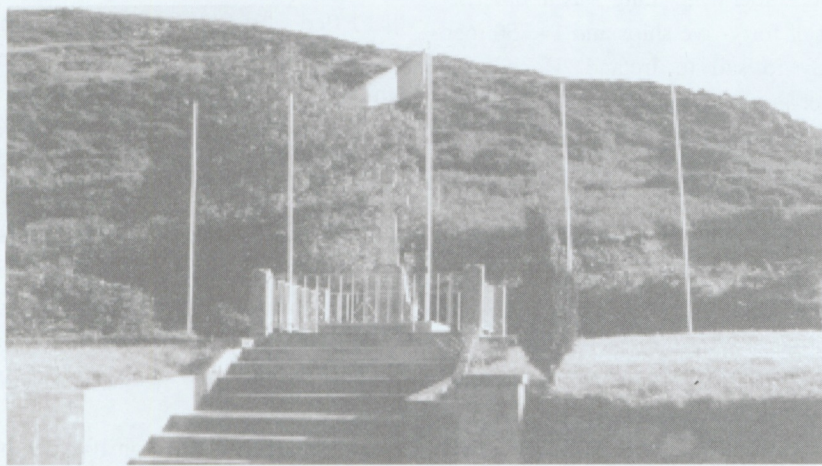
# AN IRISH AMERICAN IN SOUTH ARMAGH

When the average Irish American visits Ireland these days, it seems the last thing they wish to do is visit "troubled areas." They do not want screams for freedom to interfere with shopping, pub visits or pictures of the high crosses. It would seem governments share this concern for fear of losing tourist revenue. Many tour companies have given up travelling through the north altogether. But my visit was just the opposite from this. I wanted to visit the real Ireland, where screams for freedom have been echoing in the mountains for hundreds of years. And over the years, thousands have sacrificed life and liberty in the struggle for freedom. For me, South Armagh is the real Ireland; a living monument to the persevering faith and courage of the human spirit against tyranny.

This beautiful countryside and its people should be among the first places to visit for any Irish American. Memorials to Volunteers dot the countryside on narrow lanes that sadly, most tourists never see. They openly proclaim the pride and love of the people for brave Volunteers such as Sean Campbell and Jim Lochrie killed on active service, 6th December 1975.

Their memorial is on the very spot where they were killed and the inscription reads, "In Proud and Loving Memory Of Two Of Ireland's Noble Sons."

There are other structures that dot the countryside. These structures loom over everyday life like vultures. They are the British barracks and observation posts. They are atop the mountains and in the villages commanding everyday life. No matter where you go, you are not far from British forces of occupation and you are constantly reminded that you are indeed occupied. Signs along the road display the sentiments of an occupied people where great patriots are as common as the green fields.



Monument to fallen Heroes

The people here are wonderful. There is no shortage of charm, wit, or wisdom and if hospitality were a gem, these people would be the brightest diamonds in the world. Perhaps they, more than most, know what is important in life because they have lived so long under the antithesis of the Golden Rule; High Walls and Tower Rule.

The British occupation in south Armagh has failed over the course of time. Instead of breaking the Irish spirit, the occupation made it grow stronger. Here, guarantees of liberty and justice under the law have never been achieved. But no matter how many troops are here, how many checkpoints, how much razor wire, how many cameras, or how many listening posts, these people are a free people because freedom is safe and secure in the fortresses of their hearts; hearts strong enough for all of Ireland.

The good people in this region have deepened the pride I hold for my ancestors and for all the Irish people. They deserve our appreciation and support. They deserve to have their country and our Motherland back. It is their immutable faith and courage that has kept Ireland alive for centuries against all odds and is still as strong today as ever it was. And I would ask all Irish

Americans to stand in unity with them. I would ask all Irish Americans to have the courage to stand with them for a free, united 32 county sovereign Ireland, a nation once again where rights and liberties are guaranteed and not commodities to be bargained.

Míceal Ó Neachtain

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### THURSDAY DECEMBER 10<sup>th</sup> 1998-12-08

FLURRY BRIDGE PUB,  
JONESBOROUGH, SOUTH ARMAGH

Main Speaker :Francie Mackey

Sponsored by

THE IRISH REPUBLICAN PRISONERS WELFARE ASSOCIATION

ALL PROCEEDS TO SUPPORT THE FAMILIES AND DEPENDENTS OF IRISH POLITICAL PRISONERS

### SATURDAY DECEMBER 12<sup>th</sup> 1998

CHARACTERS PUB, 242nd Street (Off Broadway) Bronx,  
New York

Starting 8:00 P.M.

Main Speaker: Guest from Ireland  
SUGGESTED DONATION \$10

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THE IRISH REPUBLICAN PRISONERS WELFARE ASSOCIATION

ALL PROCEEDS TO SUPPORT THE FAMILIES AND DEPENDENTS OF IRISH POLITICAL PRISONERS

THE 4TH ANNUAL  
MICHAEL FLANNERY MEMORIAL  
NATIONAL TESTIMONIAL

Saturday January, 30th 1999

Rory Dolan's Pub & Restaurant 890 McLean Ave. Yonkers  
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Cocktails start at 7:00 p.m., Dinner 8:00 p.m.

Announced Honorees include:

Fr. Patrick Maloney Martin Galvin  
Dorothy N. Robinson

(Special Guest Speaker from Ireland)

Live Entertainment & Traditional Music

Order your ticket now we expect these tables to go fast!

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## BELIEVE IT OR NOT!

(QUOTES COLUMN)

"There has been a significant amount of progress but some issues remain unresolved. Society has invested too much in this to allow it to be destroyed by a handful of unreconstructed militarists in the republican movement."

David Trimble (November 25th)

"You have voted to end the territorial claim over Northern Ireland, essential to the Agreement." "Just as we must understand your yearning for a united Ireland, so too must you understand what the best of Unionism is about. They are good and decent people, just like you. They want to remain part of the UK - and I have made it clear that I value that wish."

Tony Blair, British Prime Minister (Speech to the Oireachtas 26th November '98)

"a genuine friend from a friendly nation"

Bertie Ahern speaking of Tony Blair about his coming to address the Irish Parliament (25th November '98)

"It was clear when the Prime Minister met Gerry Adams (on Monday) that as far as they are concerned they are speaking for Sinn Fein, and what the agreement says is that they have to use their influence in whatever way they can to push forward on all the issues, including decommissioning. The question is whether you think Martin McGuinness and Sinn Fein are doing what they can, and our view is that they are."

Mr. Blair's spokesman (Irish Times November 11 1998)

"The act of Decommissioning was, for some, a "necessary, concrete signal" that the war was truly over and there would be no going back to violence,"

John Bruton leader Fine Gael (Irish Times 11 November 98)

"If the party ended up with two, three or even four seats in the Dail, it would be in a very powerful position.

The possibility of a coalition arrangement, which would leave Sinn Fein with a cabinet seat, would arise.

Such an outcome would cause alarm in some quarters, but it should be remembered that the election of Workers Party candidates to the Dail in the 1980s also provoked considerable concern. As time went by, it was generally recognised that members of both the Workers Party and, later, Democratic Left had a legitimate contribution to make."

Editorial Irish News( October 27 '98)

"If the decommissioning problem is overcome, and Sinn Fein members are appointed ministers on the Northern Executive, the party can expect to become even more acceptable to the establishment. Admittedly, it will be years before a majority of southern voters will give followers of Gerry Adams even low preference votes, but O'Caolain is unlikely to be the only Sinn Fein deputy in the Dail after the next election, and it is only a matter of time before a Shinner enters the cabinet room of what they used to call an "illegitimate" Dublin Government."

(Irish News 1 11 '98)

"Today, Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland were all regions of the European Union."

Bertie Ahern speaking in Edinburgh (October '98)

"We are a nation state, not a province or a region, and we will always be. We are profoundly convinced that the best form of government on this island for everybody is self government."

Bertie Ahern Fianna Fail Ardfeis (Sat 21st November 98)

"Republicans worked tirelessly throughout the summer of 1996, deploying our most senior party members on the ground, night after night, to calm the situation and to positively influence the response of the nationalist community to the Six County-wide events surrounding Drumcree. Likewise, in July 1997, when the British government and the RUC literally trampled over the rights of nationalists on the Garvaghy Road, we acted decisively."

"Throughout the talks process we participated constructively in the work of the liaison sub-committee on decommissioning."

"Since the Good Friday agreement we have continued to use our influence positively to effect its full implementation. We secured our party support for the agreement in both referendums. Despite the risk of a destabilising effect on our own constituency we sought, and secured, our party's support to amend our constitution and removed a 75-year ban on members taking seats in any Northern assembly to allow us to participate fully in the new institutions established in accordance with the terms of the Agreement."

Martin McGuinness Sinn Fein (Irish News November 98)

"The eventual negotiated outcome fell far short of the "minimum" objectives of the Republican movement defined as late as the spring in Ireland on Sunday."

Paul Bew professor of Irish politics Queen's University Belfast (Parliamentary Brief, November 98)

"Mr. Adams has had to accept a settlement which drops the Irish territorial claim his movement has been trying to enforce by arms for more than a quarter of a century. He has had to accept the effective re-enactment of the Government of Ireland Act of 1920 - modified only by reference to the consent principle - in the new Agreement which asserts yet again the supremacy of the Westminster parliament over Northern Ireland and, indeed, that ministers exercise their authority on behalf of Her Majesty."

Paul Bew professor of Irish politics Queen's University Belfast (Parliamentary Brief, November 98)

"All the parties, including the Irish, nationalists and republicans, are signed up to the statement that the constitutional future of Northern Ireland is to be determined by the people of Northern Ireland, without any interference or coercion by anyone else. Of course, that makes the Union more secure. To say otherwise is to say that our people can't be trusted with the vote. To put it another way, look what Sinn Féin were saying at the beginning of this year. They said there would be no change to articles 2 and 3. They have changed. They said there would be no return to Stormont. We are back there. The abstentionist party is inside. Sinn Féin said there would be joint authority. There isn't.

Sinn Féin said there would be powerful cross-Border bodies with no unionist veto. The North/South council will have no executive authority and any agreements made in it will require the approval of the Assembly. On all these matters Sinn Féin were driven below their bottom line. Yes, they made gains on prisoners. Yes, that is something we find deeply distasteful, but unfortunately that matter was and is not under our control.

This year has been the watershed for Ulster. But the goal of stability and accountability is in sight. It has been a testing time for this party. But we have come through and we have carried with us and we have kept alive the hopes and yearning of this country. We can now move into the future. A future where Ulster unionism has an assured and respected place in this kingdom, in Europe and throughout the world."

David Trimble (speaking at the Ulster Unionist Party Conference)

"The Republican Movement suffered collateral damage as a result but it could not be avoided. Gerry Adams, Martin McGuinness and others put their entire credibility on the line in their efforts to secure majority republican support for forward political momentum. They took very considerable risks and a price was paid."

"Those within republicanism who sought to subvert the Sinn Fein peace strategy were faced down because the alternative was to allow rejectionists to drive the whole agenda."

Sean Brady (An Phoblact)

## JOIN US!

### The 32 County Sovereignty Movement

is a single issue campaign group dedicated to achieving Irish national sovereignty. Membership is open to all who accept and sign the 1919 Declaration of Independence.

Contact your local committee or write to: 32 County Sovereignty Movement, P.O Box 6328  
Rutland Street Dublin 1 e-mail: mackmorb@iol.ie

Theobald Wolfe Tone was born in Dublin in 1763. He was educated at Trinity College in Dublin, and in London, and qualified as a barrister. In 1785 he eloped with, and married Matilda Witherington. They lived in Irishtown, a fishing port near Dublin. The young Tone often spent time in the public galleries of The Irish House of Commons. He quickly realised the impotence of that assembly, and how its sole purpose was to serve the interests of England. Three quarters of his countrymen were precluded from representation in this "parliament" by virtue of religion. In 1790 Tone said "I made speedily what was to me a great discovery, though I might have found it in Swift and Molyneux, that the influence of England was the radical vice of our Government, and consequently that Ireland would never be either free, prosperous, or happy until she was independent, and that independence was unattainable whilst the connection with England lasted."

### United Irishmen

From his frequent visits to the Irish parliament, Tone became acquainted with the like-minded Thomas Russell. Tone anonymously published a pamphlet called, "An Argument on Behalf of the Catholics of Ireland". This had a great effect on the many liberals, particularly in Belfast. A small group of men called a meeting in Belfast on 18 October 1791. Among these were Robert Simms and Samuel Neilson, who became close friends of Tone's. The Belfast society of the United Irishmen was founded at this meeting. Wolfe Tone and his great friend Thomas Russell were invited to attend. A few weeks later a branch was founded in Dublin. The first meeting was held



on 9 November 1791. Simon Butler was the chairman and Napper Tandy the secretary. Among the members were Thomas Addis Emmet (brother of Robert), and a young nobleman, Lord Edward Fitzgerald. The aims of the United Irishmen were articulated by Tone "To subvert the tyranny of our execrable government, to break the connection with England, the never failing source of all our political evils, and to assert the independence of my country, these were my objects. To unite the whole people of Ireland, to abolish the memory of past dissensions, and to substitute the common name of Irishman in place of the denominations of Protestant, Catholic, and Dissenter; these were my means."

Even though their clergy opposed the United Irishmen, Catholics began to join in great numbers.

### The Catholic Committee

Another group pressing for changes to be made in law and parliament was the Catholic Committee. The leader of this group was a Dublin businessman, John Keogh. The Catholic Committee had sent a petition to parliament asking for Catholics to be given their full rights. Parliament, however, would not even consider the petition and called them "a rabble of obscure, porter-drinking mechanics, without property, pretensions or influence, who met in holes and corners." The Committee were very angry at this and decided to mount a campaign to get their rights.

## Theobald Wolfe Tone

### 1763 - 1798

As this year draws to a close, and the numerous commentaries and commemorations which marked the anniversary of 1798 Rebellion come to an end, the month of November is especially poignant. It was this month that marks the anniversary of the death of Wolfe Tone a young Irish man who realised that the only real future for the people of Ireland was in breaking the connection with England.



By this time Wolfe Tone was well known in Dublin, both as a founder the United Irishmen and because of his writings arguing in favour of Catholic rights. It was decided by the Committee to appoint him as secretary in 1792. Tone worked tirelessly for the Committee during 1792. On 3 December 1792 235 delegates from all over Ireland met in Tailors' Hall in Dublin. After much discussion it was decided that Tone and five delegates would go to London to hand a petition to King George III, in person.

When they arrived, the British Minister for Home Affairs tried to prevent the delegation from seeing the king in person. They insisted and eventually on the 2 January 1793, they succeeded in handing their petition over.

### Catholic Enfranchisement Act.

Under instruction from the king to do something about the Irish situation, the Irish parliament passed a law called the Catholic Enfranchisement Act. This gave Catholics the right to vote, go to university and have certain state jobs. However they were still barred from many of the highest jobs in the land, and more importantly, they were still forbidden to sit in parliament. Wolfe Tone was very disappointed about this. The Catholic Committee however decided that the Act was as good as they were likely to get, so they ended their campaign.

When war was declared between France and England in 1793, the United Irishmen were suspected of being in league with the French.

### "America"

In danger of arrest Tone fled with his family to America. Before departing for America he went to Belfast. In his diary he mentions one memorable day he spent with his friends Thomas Russell, Samuel Neilson, Robert Simms and Henry Joy McCracken on the Cave Hill outside Belfast. There at MacArt's Fort the five men swore an oath never to give

*Who fears to speak of '98?  
The enemy of Ireland fears.  
For Ireland undergenerate  
Keeps yet the spirit of old years;  
He sees in visions of the night  
A nation arming for the right.*

*Composed by Lionel Johnson.*

up their efforts to make Ireland a free, independent country. Tone had decided before leaving Ireland, that he would stay just long enough in America to see his wife and family settled in. He would then go to France to try to arrange for a French force to be sent to Ireland. He sailed for France in 1796

### Invasion Fleet

In Paris he pleaded Ireland's cause with the French, urging them to send an invasion fleet

to Ireland. Eventually the long months in France paid off. The French Directory decided on favour of sending an expedition to Ireland. A well-known French leader, General Hoche, agreed to command it.

Tone now a Colonel in the French army was very excited and full of hope as he set out in October to join the expedition in the French port of Brest. On the way, however, he heard very sad news. His friends Russell and Neilson had been arrested the month before and were now in prison. He hoped the expedition would arrive in time to save them.

By mid December everything was in order. A large fleet of forty-five ships and 14,750 men were ready to sail to Ireland. Hoche, the commander-in-chief, sailed on a ship called the Fraternite which also carried all the money and plans for the expedition. Tone was aboard a ship called the indomitable. Half the ships left Brest by a dangerous channel to avoid being caught by British ships, which had been keeping watch off the French coast. Unfortunately one ship hit rocks and sank in the channel. More than a thousand men drowned in this accident.

Due to thick fog the Fraternite, the ship carrying Hoche and all the money and plans sailed off course away from the rest of the fleet.

On the 21 December the fleet arrived at Bantry Bay. The Fraternite had still not turned up. General Grouchy, second in command, didn't want to land until Hoche arrived, so he ordered the ships to wait. Tone was bitterly disappointed that they did not land straight away.

As they waited the weather deteriorated and gale force winds blew up scattering almost twenty ships. The gale intensified and on Christmas day Grouchy's ship was driven out to sea and was unable to return to Bantry Bay. On December 29 the remaining ships abandoned the attempt to land and returned to France with Tone on board bitterly disappointed. He was utterly dejected but still determined.

### Secret Meeting

Back in Ireland the Society of the United Irishmen had spread throughout Ireland. Thousands of people had joined and were preparing to rise in rebellion when help arrived from France. Blacksmiths all over the country were busy making pikes to be used in as weapons by the peasants. The thatched roofs of the peasants' cabins and cottages were used as hiding places for the weapons.

Unknown to the leaders, the government had planted many spies in the United Irishman organisation. On the 12 March 1798, government forces raided a secret meeting and arrested the leaders. Similar raids were made on that day and other prominent United Irishmen were arrested and brought to prison. Thomas Addis Emmet was among those arrested.

The government decided the best way to prevent rebellion was to frighten the people into submission. Over the next few months the military, under the brutal General Lake, burned down homes and flogged and hanged anyone suspected of being involved in the United Irishmen.

### Rebellion

The people were in despair. Their leaders had been arrested and the long-awaited help from France had still not come. They were unable to endure the situation any longer and rebellions broke out in different parts of the country.

Tone managed to persuade the French to send a further expedition under General Humbert with 1,000 men. This landed in August 1798. After some initial successes Humbert surrendered to superior English forces. Sadly it arrived too late to aid the Rising.

### Gallant battle

This defeat raised alarm in Paris; a further expedition of 3,000 under Generals Bompard and Hardy set sail for Ireland. Tone himself was onboard. They approached Lough Swilly on the north coast. An English fleet lay in wait; the French were outnumbered and out-gunned. The battle was a foregone conclusion. Knowing the fate that lay in store for Tone, the French put a boat at his disposal to escape. He declined with these words, "Shall it be said that I fled while the French were fighting the battle of my country?" After a gallant battle, in which Tone manned one of the guns on the deck of the Hoche fighting desperately to save the fleet, the French surrendered.

### Court Martial

At first Tone, dressed as a French officer was not recognised. But an old student colleague recognised him. He was clapped in irons, manacled, and tied to a horse he faced the long trip to Dublin.

He was court-martialled on 10 November. He remained calm and dignified during the trial although he knew he would be found guilty and condemned to death

### Bodenstown Cemetry

He requested the dignity of a soldier's death, as a French officer. But he was sentenced to die as a "traitor" on the gallows.

He had already decided he would not let himself be hanged as a traitor. That night, 11 November, while the soldiers were erecting the gallows outside his prison cell, he attempted to take his own life. He inflicted a deep and fatal wound on himself, but did not die immediately. He lingered on in great pain for a week. Finally, on 19 November 1798, he died. He was thirty-five years old. He was buried in Bodenstown cemetery in County Kildare.

### Separatist

Wolfe Tone was a very remarkable man. Almost single-handed he persuaded the French to send two expeditions to invade Ireland. He belonged to the ruling class in Ireland and could have lived comfortably as a barrister in Dublin. Instead he was prepared to suffer exile and death in the pursuit of his ideal, an independent, united Ireland where everyone, regardless of creed or class, would be cherished equally. He is considered by some as the Father of Irish Republicanism. Padraig Pearse wrote of him "It will be conceded that Wolfe Tone was a Separatist; he is The Separatist."

Sadly, two hundred years later the connection with England remains, sadder still the persecution of political dissentants who support the separatist ideal continues.